

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05

/069 W

-----050625Z 024672 /10

R 041335Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9217

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 02090

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: ETRD,OVIP,BE

SUBJECT: VISIT OF BELGIAN FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER KNOOPS ET AL

1.ETIENNE KNOOPS,BELGIUM'S MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE,AND JACQUES GROOTHEAERT,FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS,WILL BE IN WASHINGTON FROM MARCH 13-16 FOR CONFERENCES OF OFFICERS FROM BELGIAN EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES IN THE U.S. THEY HAVE ASKED THEIR EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON TO SET UP APPOINTMENTS WITH ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS ON WEDNESDAY,MARCH 16. THEIR CHIEF INTERESTS IN THESE MEETINGS WILL BE THE MULTI-FIBER AGREEMENT (SEE BRUSSELS 1928),THE MULTINATIONAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS, EAST-WEST TRADE AND CREDITS,AND ENERGY POLICY.ON THESE SUBJECTS,KNOOPS AND GROOTHAERT ARE INSTRUMENTAL IN DEVELOPING BELGIAN POLICY.IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE TO FACILITATE ARRANGING APPOINTMENTS WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS.

2.KNOOPS IS A YUNG,VIGOROUS POLITICAL FIGURE (PRLW-WALLOON LIBERAL,FRENCH-SPEAKING)HE HOPES TO MAKE THE BACKWATER JOB OF FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER INTO SOMETHING MORE INFLUENTIAL.IN HIS NEW POSITIN HE HAS BEEN

ACTIVE IN SEEKING NEW MARKETS FOR BELGIUM IN OPEC COUNTRIES

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AND ELSEWHERE.HE ALSO SEEKS A MORE IMPORTANT ROLE FOR HIS MINISTRY THAN HERETOFORE IN DEVELOPING BELGIAN POSITIONS ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE ISSUES.

3.GROOTHEART,FORMERLY BELGIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE PRC AND NORTH VIETNAM,ALSO IS RELATIVELY NEW TO HIS JOB. WITH THE DEPARTURE OF VISCOUNT DAVIGNONG TO THE

EUROPEAN COMMISSION,GROOTHEART SHAPES UP AS THE MOST  
INFLUENTIAL OFFICER IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.NO REPLACEMENT FOR  
DAVIGNON AS DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS HAS YET BEEN  
NAMED,AND GROOTHAERT HAS TAKEN OVER SOME OF  
DAVIGNON'S OLD RESPONSIBILITIES,SUCH AS ENERGY POLICY.  
BEFORE GOING TO PEKING IN 1972,HIS FOREIGN POSTS WERE  
MEXICO,(AS AMBASSADOR),LONDON,SAN FRANCISCO,  
LEOPOLDVILLE,PARIS,MOSCOW, AND PRAGUE.  
RENNER

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** ETRD, OVIP, BE, US, (KNOOPS, ETIENNE), (GROOTHEAERT, JACQUES)  
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**Review Markings:**  
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